

REMARKS

The above amendment and these remarks are responsive to the Office action of 5 Mar 2007.

Claims 1, 10-13, 17, and 19 are in the case, none as yet allowed.

Claim Objections

Claim 10 has been objected to as informal. The Examiner asks "Who is accepting the payment of an invoice?"

Applicants have amended the claim to clarify that this acceptance (or rejection) is done by the requestor, who is the person originating the need for this purchase. See Specification, page 12, lines 10-15.

35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1, 10-13, 17, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as not complying with the written description requirement. The Examiner apparently

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could not find substantial support in the specification for the limitation "generating a goods receipt". This refers to the automated generation, or posting, by the system to the SAP system of a "goods receipt" from a positive confirmation response entered by the requestor.

"Goods received ... ticket" and "goods receipt" are equivalent terms as used in applicant's specification. Both refer to a record made by the system of a positive response entered by the requestor of goods or services. This equivalence should be apparent from applicant's description of "positive confirmation" response, "goods receipt" and "goods received ... ticket" in the specification as follows:

In the event that requestor 46 accepts the invoice, or authorizes payment, an automated goods received (move ticket) is generated back to SAP system 42 and payment made without further human intervention. In the event that requestor 46 rejects the invoice, an accounts payable rejection process 412 is initiated which, in an exemplary embodiment, may involve buyer 414 in advising vendor 48 of the rejection. [Specification, paragraph beginning at page 9, line 19. Emphasis added.]

Requesters 46 are provided notice 420 of invoices which require positive confirmation. This notice directs the user (aka requester or authorizer) to a location where the positive confirmation can be performed. The terms user, requester, authorizer are used to refer to persons requesting commodities, which may be tangible goods or intangible goods, such as

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services, and to persons acting on behalf of or in lieu of such persons. A user interface represented by line 428 and executed by application 424 is provided to database 425 for requester 46 to enter an invoice ID and obtain access to the invoice data. This interface also provides a method for accepting or rejecting the invoice, that is, for providing positive confirmation response 421. [Specification, paragraph beginning at page 12, line 10. Emphasis added.]

This bridge executed within positive confirmation bridge 426 may be written to extract positive confirmation responses received by RCW 422 from requesters 46, and pass the extracted file of responses to SAP 42 for posting as goods receipts. [Specification, paragraph beginning at page 12, line 16. Emphasis added.]

This map within bridge 426 creates an output file of all positive confirmation responses recorded since the map was last executed. A delivery component in server 423 is then invoked to initiate transfer of the output file to SAP 42. Upon successful transfer of the positive confirmation file to SAP 42, a SAP goods receipt map formats the incoming data as required by SAP and invokes a SAP material movement IDOC function to post the goods receipt against the corresponding purchase order item. [Specification, paragraph beginning at page 14, line 40. Emphasis added.]

On the SAP 42 side of the transfer, a bridge

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receives the output file as a goods movement IDOC file, and a script executes within SAP 42 to receive the file, do trailer processing, copy the input file to a history file, raise an SAP user event to start a job to create SAP goods movement documents and post the goods receipt documents in support of eventual payments against the approved invoices to the vendor.

[Specification, paragraph beginning at page 14, line 20. Emphasis added.]

Applicants have amended the claims to more clearly set forth that goods receipts are generated, or created, from a requestor response either accepting or rejecting payment of an invoice.

Applicant represents that the material above quoted provides to those of skill in the art a sufficient understanding of how a goods receipt is generated.

Applicant's invention is not directed to the payment of the invoice, but rather to the generation of the receipt.

When a invoice is received from a vendor which includes an item marked as "receipt required", payment is blocked and notification sent to the user. The user enters a response either approving or rejecting payment, and from that response a goods receipt is posted to remove the block and, in the case of approval, pay the invoice.

Applicant requests that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112 be reconsidered and withdrawn, that claims 1, 10-13, 17, and 19 be allowed.

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35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1, and 10-12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Maners, U.S. Patent 6,507,826 in view of *University of New Hampshire Financial and Administrative Procedures*, hereinafter, *Procedures*.

Claims 13, 17, and 19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Maners in view of *Procedures* and further in view of Furphy et al. U.S. Patent 6,882,983.

Applicants invention is represented as being particularly useful for goods and services not coming through a receiving dock, including automating preparation of a move ticket responsive to requestor entered positive confirmation [Specification, page 4, lines 15-19].

Commodities that typically designated as needing positive confirmation are those that would not flow through a traditional receiving dock where a dock worker takes parts off a truck, counts them, and then creates a receipt transaction into an application which bridges to the accounts payable system where a three way match would occur.

In applicant's invention, the commodities where positive confirmation would be configured are those like services. Examples of such services includes a painter painting an office, an electrician wiring a room, and a

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telecommunications worker installing a network router. The business that receives benefit from such services and pays for them does not want the invoices from the vendor for these services paid until a person explicitly concludes that the service was done and done to specification.

In applicant's invention, the way the positive confirmation process occurs this is: an invoice arrives and is checked against the purchase order. It is determined that the purchase order item referenced on the received invoice has a positive confirmation designated commodity (that is, a receivable commodity) for which there is no existing receipt, such as may be expected from a dock worker for commodities which do flow through a receiving dock. In accordance with applicant's invention, the system uses the invoice information to send a positive confirmation notice to the requester. That requester must respond to the positive confirmation notice. The response can be either: do not pay or pay it. If the response is to pay it, a goods or service receipt is generated. Once that receipt reaches accounts payable (as an automated receipt transaction file), the three way match occurs and the invoice will be accepted for payment. Applicants are not claiming to be the first to do three way match. Rather, the novelty resides in the way the receipt for the goods or services is generated from the invoice and purchase order and submitted by the requester.

The Examiner refers to Maners as teaching positive and negative processing, substantially as set forth in claims 1 and 10-12. [Office Action, page 7.]

Applicants respond by referencing Maners Col. 5, lines

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64 to page 6, line 1, and Col. 8, lines 7-20. These describe the concept of "orphan" invoices. These are invoices not referencing a purchase order.

On the other hand, applicant claims the generation of goods receipts which are tied to a specific purchase order. Applicants' goods receipts indicate that goods for which a purchase order have been created have been received. Payment of such purchase orders is blocked until the requestor responds. This is not what is taught by the invoice processing of Maners, which deals with orphan invoices -- invoices for which a purchase order has not previously been generated.

The process taught by Maners is as follows. An invoice arrives for which there is no receipt, and for which a prior invoice number cannot be found [Maners, Col. 5, lines 59-62]. Consequently, the invoice is not accepted for payment. A purchasing person would then must investigate the missing receipt. To do so, he would need to contact the requester to see if the goods/service was received/performed. If the answer is yes, the purchasing person would then contact a person that had access and authorization to create receipts. That person would then create the missing receipt which would flow to accounts payable where the three way match would take place. Applicants claimed process for generating the receipt, as described above, improves on this procedure. Consequently, the combination of Maners and the three-way match taught by Procedures do not teach applicant's process for generating receipts.

The Examiner asserts that Maners teaches positive and

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negative processing. [Office Action, page 7.] However, applicants argue that Maners' positive processing refers only to orphan invoices, and therefore does not teach the claimed aspects of blocking payment on an invoice which references a purchase order marked with items requiring positive confirmation.

With respect to the combination of Maners and Procedures, the Examiner asserts that such teach a three-way match. This combination does teach a three-way match, but not how the received amount is generated. Applicants block payment on the invoice when the corresponding purchase order requires such. Applicants' invention, therefore, refers to the manner in which an invoice on a purchase order is used to obtain authorization and generate a goods receipt required for the three-way match.

Applicant notes that the claimed invention is not directed to the fact that posting a receipt causes an invoice to be paid. Rather, applicant's invention is directed to the manner in which to collect the receipt from the requester responsive to the arrival of an invoice from the supplier. Applicant is not merely claiming that doing a receipt triggers payment. Rather, it is the process of generating that receipt. The combination of Barnes, Maners and Procedures does not teach this process.

With respect to claim 13, 17 and 19, the Examiner refers to claims 1 and 10. Applicant has previously discussed the distinctions with respect to Maners and Procedures.

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With respect to Furphy, in applicant's invention, when an invoice is received and it is determined that the invoice includes a mismatch, that is a commodity marked as receivable for which a receipt has not been previously generated, an E-mail request is sent to the original requestor (not the buyer) to generate the receipt. ("Separation of duties" requires that applicant not request such of the buyer.) Applicants resolve the mismatch by requiring that the original requestor provide a positive confirmation response.

Thus, applicant's invention relates to the generation of the receipt of goods. Goods designated as receivable and which are received through the receiving dock will have that receipt generated by receiving dock personnel, whereas goods designated as receivable and which are not received through the receiving dock will have that receipt generated by the original requestor, which latter receipt is requested by an e-mail request directly to that requestor.

Furphy, on the other hand, is silent on the process implemented for generating the receipt. Furphy provides a single interactive platform 15 for processing transaction data for both buying companies and selling companies (Col. 5, at line 12). At col. 7, line 60ff, Furphy teaches that receiving documents provide receipt data corresponding to the products actually received by the buying company, which will then be combined with information from the purchase order to determine the total cost of goods received. At col. 8, line 38ff Furphy describes the resolution of non-matching charge codes, and requesting resolution from buyers or default buyers. At col. 9, line 34 ff Furphy describes

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that further processing is executed when receipt data and invoices do not match, and at col. 11, line 56ff the use of rules-based schemes to resolve differences, and at col. 12, line 1ff the use of a workflow process for resolving charge code discrepancies. Similarly, at col. 15, line 57 ff Furphy refers to resolving discrepancies between purchase order data, invoice data, and receipt data.

However, in none of these teachings, nor elsewhere in the reference, does Furphy teach applicant's claimed process for generating goods receipts, as distinguished from the subsequent use of such receipts in the purchase order, invoice, goods receipt three-way match.

Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly define within the body of each independent claim the process for generating the receipt document (goods receipt), and requests that they be allowed.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Applicants urge that the above amendment be entered and the case passed to issue with claims 1, 10-13, 17, and 19.

The Application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action by the Examiner is urged. Should differences remain, however, which do not place one/more of the remaining claims in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to phone the undersigned at the number provided below for the purpose of providing constructive

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assistance and suggestions in order that allowable claims can be presented, thereby placing the Application in condition for allowance without further proceedings being necessary.

Sincerely,

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By


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Date: 12 Nov 2007

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